

FLV 149

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

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Bezmer Airfield

- The sketch attached as Appendix A on page 5 shows the condition of Bezmer airfield as of September 1951. At this time there was no runway, but only two parking strips one kilometer in length. The military authorities had demanded that the grounds located to the west and to the south of the airfield be turned over to them. The material necessary for the construction of runways had already been assembled at the field, to the right and to the left of the barracks.
- All that remains of the direct route Bezmer Station - Bolyarsko (N 42-26, E 26-21) is a spur line going from the main line to the entrance to the airfield. Those who previously used the old route are now forced to take the road to Botevo (N 42-21, E 26-22) and a dirt road which runs east and west from this road to the village. A railway branch line serving the airfield has been constructed and joins the field to the Stara Zagora - Zimnitsa (N 42-35, E 26-35) line. A second railway branch line has been constructed further to the east, starting from this line and terminating at the Yambol - Elkhovo line, at a new station known as Georgi Drazhev. This branch line makes it possible for military trains coming from the west (Sofia, Plovdiv, Stara Zagora, etc.) and going toward Elkhovo, to avoid the long detour which runs through Yambol.
- In spite of the slight progress made in the construction of Bezmer airfield as of September 1951, a large number of aircraft had been brought here, including:
 - 50 jet aircraft, parked in hangar #3;
 - Five jet aircraft parked on the airfield, at position #10;
 - 20 bombers parked in hangar #4;
 - 15 bombers parked in hangar #5;
 - 10 Stukas parked in hangar #6;

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- 2 -

- f. 20 three-engine bombers parked on the airfield at position #8; and
 - g. Two three-engine bombers parked on the airfield at position #9.
4. As of September 1951, there were 40 pilot officers and radio operators (30 Soviets and 10 Bulgarians) and a large number of Soviet engineers at Bezmer airfield. Crews of the jet aircraft were exclusively Soviet, while the crews of other aircraft were always mixed. The number of officer-pilots may seem small in comparison to the number of aircraft but, in case of necessity, the crews based at Yambol airfield, less than 12 kilometers distant, were called upon.
 5. Defense of Bezmer airfield was taken care of by five 75 mm. antiaircraft guns located in a battery on hill 188, 1,600 meters northwest of the field. There were also secret machine gun positions set up only at night at the airfield and in the vicinity.
 6. As of early September 1952, Trudovak battalion [] was working at Bezmer airfield. The concrete runway was allegedly 50 centimeters thick. The two hangars which have been completed can each accommodate 30-40 aircraft. On 8 September 1952, six MIGs and 12 YAKs were observed at this field. An unidentified antiaircraft artillery captain was quartered near the airfield. At least six antiaircraft guns were installed around the airfield together with smaller caliber guns.
 7. On the afternoon of 4 October 1952, approximately 30 jet aircraft (MIG-15s and one unidentified type plane) were observed at Bezmer airfield.

Yambol Airfield []

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8. A workshop for repairing aircraft has been recently constructed at Yambol airfield. Forty-six aircraft (four of them being twin-engine bombers) were observed at this field. Most of these planes date from World War II. Two MIG-15 fighters were also observed during air maneuvers here. There are still seven MIG-15s at Yambol airfield. The pilots are Bulgarian officers but there are also several Soviet military instructors and military engineers at this field.
 9. It is further reported that the frontier in the Yambol area is not strongly guarded and there are no special obstacles to passage here. However, ambushes organized within the forbidden area are very dangerous since they are composed of inhabitants of the frontier zone. The peasants of these frontier villages are so afraid that it is very hard to expect to receive any help from them. According to certain reports, food stocks are more abundant in the frontier areas than in the interior of the country, the reason being that the government shows itself far less harsh toward the population of frontier areas since they want to keep it content and prevent it from escaping to Turkey.
- Malevo Airfield []
10. The 8 Artillery Regiment, partially motorized, is encamped in the vicinity of the Malevo airfield. This regiment is equipped with two types of cannons:
 - a. Long, medium caliber guns of Soviet construction; and
 - b. Howitzers.
 11. In late September 1952, an antiaircraft artillery battalion came from Khaskovo and engaged in firing practice together with the 8 Artillery regiment. The battalion was equipped with:
 - a. A battery of 37 mm. German antiaircraft guns; and
 - b. Six to eight 20 mm. automatic guns, of German or Swedish manufacture.
 12. Upon its departure, the antiaircraft battalion left behind a battery of large antiaircraft guns as well as several searchlights. This battalion had received new

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- 3 -

guns in July which it left at the Khaskovo depot.

13. Several flights were observed from time to time at Malevo airfield and appeared to be merely aircraft in transit. Also noted was a depot containing a small quantity of gasoline in barrels.

Dobrich Airfield [REDACTED]

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14. On 12, 13, and 14 September 1952, air maneuvers were carried out over Dobrich airfield, and parachutes were dropped. The antiaircraft artillery then went into action. On the airfield there are 12 jet aircraft and about 100 standard type aircraft, including several squadrons of YAK-9s and YAK-4s (bombers).

Telish Airfield [REDACTED]

50X1-HUM

15. There are approximately 130 standard-type fighter aircraft at Telish airfield. Recently 130 fighters and 18 MIGs landed here. Two Soviet majors, one arrived just recently, are stationed at this airfield. One captain and 12 Soviet non-commissioned officers are also based here.
16. A strong antiaircraft defense installation is allegedly located at Telish airfield. It included:
- a. 18 Soviet 85-90 mm. cannons;
 - b. 24 Soviet 25 mm. cannons; and
 - c. 40 antiaircraft machine guns of 12 mm.

17. Twelve searchlights were observed lit simultaneously during night exercises. There are very few day flights at this field. The air defense here is handled by the 4 Antiaircraft Artillery Regiment of the Army (sic).

Vrazhdebna Airfield [REDACTED]

50X1-HUM

18. The new hangar located 200 meters east of the air terminal is larger than had been previously reported. It can hold an LI-2, so that it is thus approximately 30 meters in width. It is considerably longer, at least 40 meters long. The four military hangars are identical. They have the same rectangular shape, if not the same dimensions as the hangars of Gorna Oryakhovitsa and Chayka. Each hangar includes two adjoining sections. At Vrazhdebna the width of one of these sections is that of a twin-engine aircraft, thus at least 18 meters wide. Apparently a layer of earth was placed on the roof of the hangars. Between Hangar #4 and Hangar #5 (which is at least 30 x 30 meters in size), there is a group of small buildings surmounted by a square chimney two or three meters higher than the surrounding buildings which are probably used as workshops.
19. On the afternoon of 24 October 1952, it was raining and the ground was soaked here and there. However the TABSO (Transportno Aviatsionno Bulgaro-Sovetsko Obshtestvo; Bulgaro-Soviet Air Transport Affiliation) aircraft (LI-2s) and AERO-FLOT planes (IL-12) were landing beside the concrete runway, on grassy soil.
20. At 1:00 p.m. on 24 October 1952, the TABSO LI-2 aircraft [REDACTED] landed at Vrazhdebna airfield. This particular plane had not been observed prior to this time.
21. In the military section of this field there were 35-40 aircraft of various types, large and small in size, but it was impossible to identify them because of the bad weather. Some of the planes were parked in front of the hangars. The majority of them were located inside and in front of the small woods which borders the field to the north, west of the buildings. A military twin-engine monoplane with trapezoid wings with slightly rounded wing-tips, and a single tail flew over the field at 4:30 p.m. on 24 October 1952.

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- 4 -

50X1-HUM

Bozhurishte Airfield

22. Bozhurishte airfield was observed from the train which leads from Voluyak (N 42-47, E 23-14) to Bankya (N 42-42, E 23-08), which runs along the south-east border of this field. The Bozhurishte railway station is located on the longer side of the airfield. No concrete runway was noted. The terrain appears to be entirely grassy. A transport plane (probably a PS-84) and four or five small unidentified single-engine planes (probably fighters) were observed here.

Novoseltsi Airfield

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23. Single-engine aircraft were observed from the Sofia-Pirdop road while they were taking off and landing at the Novoseltsi field. Takeoffs and landings were in an east-west direction. The field is located to the south and in the immediate vicinity of Musachevo (N 42-41, E 23-35). Four or five single engine aircraft were observed flying over the field, making their landing approach. One of these aircraft was towing a glider.

Belchin Airfield

50X1-HUM

24. Work on the installation of an airfield was allegedly carried out this past summer between Belchin (N 42-20, E 23-22), 15 kilometers west of Samokov and Alino (N 42-24, E 23-23) five kilometers north of Belchin. In 1940 the Belchinska-Banya field (three kilometers east of Belchin) was used as an emergency field.
25. In June and October 1952, there were no signs of the existence of an airfield in the Belchin-Belchinska Banya-Alino area. It is possible that the work undertaken in the summer of 1952 in this area consisted of drainage, leveling, and clearing the area, all of which work was not noticeable.

Bezmer Airfield

50X1-HUM

26. The following legend refers to sketch of Bezmer airfield included as Appendix A on page 5:
1. Control tower and observation post
 2. Truck garage, 60 x 20 meters in size
 3. Jet aircraft hangar, 150 x 40 meters in size
 4. Bomber hangar, 100 x 20 meters in size
 5. Bomber hangar, 80 x 20 meters in size
 6. Hangar for Stuka aircraft, 80 x 40 meters in size
 7. Barracks
 8. Open air parking area for three-engine bombers
 9. Open air parking area for three-engine bombers
 10. Open air parking area for jet aircraft
 11. 3-story building, 250 x 20 meters in size; ground floor: headquarters, mess, kitchens, dining room; other two floors: sleeping quarters.
 12. Officers' club, 60 x 10 meters in size
 13. Store room
 14. Clothing warehouse
 15. Bachelor officers quarters
 16. Guard post
 17. Small station of the airfield
 18. Three gasoline depots
 19. Married officers quarters
 20. Bezmer Railway Station

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